



Eugene Metro Futbol Club News

WINTER 2010

Season's Greetings All:

It doesn't seem possible that another year of soccer is already 'in the books' but there is no denying that it is almost time to flip the calendar. EMFC has had another great year and we are extremely thankful to all of our committed players, parents, coaches and volunteers. This winter newsletter is full of great information and we hope it helps communicate the level of commitment that our staff and board have in serving you. We wish you and your family health, happiness and prosperity in the New Year.

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and Go EMFC!

Jason Giles, Board President

In This Issue

- A Word from Coach Jurgen.....1
- Little Metros.....2
- Upcoming Events.....2
- How Important is the Mindset of a Competitive Soccer Player.....3
- Expanding EMFC Access to the Community.....4
- The Science of Speed and Agility..... 5, 6
- EMFC's Commitment to ACL Injury Prevention..... 6, 7

Hello EMFC Player and Families,

After a successful fall season all of our younger players from Little Metros, U10s and U11 to U14 teams have moved indoors. Our older players are beginning their winter season by fighting the current La Nina conditions outdoors. Most of you are probably preparing for a nice and peaceful holiday season. I want to use this time of the year to give all of our players and families an update on the past, present, and the future of our club.

2010 was a World Cup year hosted for the first time on the African continent in South Africa. EMFC was formed during the last World Cup in Germany in 2006. During these four years the most exciting tournament in the World traveled from Europe to Africa, while Eugene Metro FC grew from a small but vibrant soccer club into one of the largest clubs in Oregon with deep roots in our communities in Springfield and Eugene. Our club provides a home for soccer players in both communities and reaches now as far as Roseburg to the South and Salem to the North. We serve kids from first grade to fourth grade in our growing Little Metro program. We established a U10 academy for committed and competitive fourth grade boys and girls and we run currently six teams. And our U11 to U14 youth program has grown from three teams in 2006



to now 11 teams. Our U15-18 program grew from one team to now eight older teams. In addition to these year round programs we are proud to run our TOP Soccer program every winter under the direction of Jeremy Flores for players with disabilities. EMFC also offered a spring break camp for over 150 players, a Coerver speed camp in the summer for about 70 players, and our winter indoor program provides technical development for 30 players. EMFC serves now over 500 soccer players year round.

In 2010 EMFC staff coaches participated in addition to acquiring USSF licenses in nine coaching clinics to further EMFC's goal to continue coaches' education. Topics ranged from low pressure defense and improving twin strikers, to integrating goalkeepers in training sessions and the importance of speed and agility training. Our coaches learned more about the ACL injury prevention program PEP (see other article in this issue) and learned more about the important role of communication with parents and players.

In May 2010, EMFC established a new and enhanced speed and agility program in the club. Please read speed and agility trainer Michael Caprai's article in this same issue to learn more about this new addition to our program.

EMFC also made a commitment to isoccer, the National Standards Project, in measuring our players' technical abilities. Most of our teams have been assessed and

(Continued on page 2)

can access their results on the isoccer website. Our coaches are integrating isoccer exercises in their weekly training program, they assign homework for players, and it has become clear that the program does improve players' technical skills.

This year has been a difficult year for Oregon soccer. Oregon's main youth soccer organization OYSA has been challenged by a number of Portland clubs who formed their own Oregon Premier League organization. After one fall season EMFC has had a good experience playing in this new league. While I will continue to work on improving our number of home games, everything else this fall made for a competitive, fun and successful OPL fall season. Our U15-18 teams will all play in the OPL winter league with an equal number of home and away games. Our U12-14 teams will all participate in the OPL spring league which will consist of eight games and begins February 26/27 and runs to April 9/10, 2011. In April/May OPL will run a state cup tournament for all U11 to U18 teams. Winners of the OPL state cup will automatically get a berth into the US Club National Cup. Many of our older teams will participate in College Showcases next year to make sure that college coaches are able to watch our players. If your son or daughter wants to play soccer in college please take a look at our website to see how to create a soccer resume and how to contact college coaches. It is important that our players contact all the coaches of the colleges that they are interested in and let them know about their interest to play soccer at a particular college. EMFC's next goal is to have a specific contact person in place to help EMFC players and families navigate the college soccer process.

2010 was also the inaugural Northwest Champions League (NWCL) season. This summer and fall our U13 boys Boca Jrs with head coach Joe Beeler and assistant coach Daley Stevens competed in seven games and sit currently in third place in their bracket. With four more games to go in December the Bocas have a good chance to advance to the final round. In addition, the Bocas

also qualified for next year's NWCL during their regular OPL fall season. Our U11 girls Athletica and our U14 girls Impact missed the qualifying spot by a very close margin. The U15 girls Magic, the U17 girls Spirit and the U17 boys Fusion will compete starting in December in the NWCL. These additional games against the best teams in Washington provide our players and teams with more competition and make the fall OPL season a more competitive environment since the first four spots in the league are reserved for the NWCL.

In the last few weeks EMFC teams have practiced on the newly built turf fields at Lane Community College. We hope to establish a home on the beautiful campus of LCC and make it a home for our growing number of EMFC players and families. Please make sure to use these facilities as our home and leave the fields and its surroundings as if it is our own backyard. As the Director of EMFC it is a tremendous asset and privilege to watch all our teams practice and play games on these fields. It gives all of us an opportunity to see all our players in all age groups. Please help us to maintain these fields as best as we can.

I am honored and privileged to serve as your Director of Coaching.

Go EMFC

All the best from Coach Jürgen

Little Metros

Little Metros is the developmental program for EMFC. This program incorporates players ages six to ten. All Little Metro training sessions focus on introducing and improving the ball handling skills needed to become a successful young soccer player. At this young age, players will work on touching the ball as often as possible in order to learn the motor skills necessary to move with the ball in all possible directions. Players are encouraged to work with the ball, experiment with the ball, and become accustomed to handling the ball in all situations.

Little Metros operates within four different training modules: the Spring Skills Academy and League, the Summer Skills Academy, the Fall Skills Academy and League and the Winter Skills Academy. All of these modules consist of two training sessions a week where the primary focus is learning of technical skills and utilizing them in small sided games. The technical aspect of the session is usually a ratio of one player to one ball. The small sided games allow every player to get a maximum number of touches on the ball and allow each player to apply their newly learned soccer skills in a fun game environment. In the spring and fall an in house league is played on Friday nights. The first and second graders play in a three vs. three format to small goals. The third and fourth graders play six vs. six to larger goals with keepers. With smaller numbers on the field, players maximize their amount of touches on the ball.

The Little Metros program has grown rapidly in the past few years. When first taking over the program in the spring of 2009, Little Metros averaged around 80 players for the spring and fall academy and about 25 players for the summer and winter foot skills. We now average around 105 for the spring and fall academies and this year's winter foot skills registered 53 players. Being the feeder program for the competitive club, growth is a must if we are to stay competitive in the state of Oregon.

For more information on the Little Metro Programs, please visit our website at www.littlemetros.org.

Jen Davin

Little Metros Program Director

Upcoming EMFC Events

1. EMFC Winter Skills Camp from December 28-30, 2010 at the new indoor soccer center at West 11th.
2. Pick up games on Saturdays in December and January. See details on our website.

How Important is the Mindset of a Competitive Soccer Player?

When watching soccer games our eye is easily attracted to ability, technical skill, and athleticism. We always notice fast players. Coaches are no different. We see a player as described above and we are immediately drawn to them. If we are in the process of selecting our team, our first thought may be that this is a player we need on our team. However, is technical ability and above average athleticism the most important component of a soccer player? Do size, quickness, speed and strength trump everything else?

In the arena of player development, is there one component that more strongly affects a player's development, enjoyment of the game or ability to compete?

As a youth competitive club player, I remember playing in games where I knew my team had superior technical ability, coaching, and soccer IQ as compared to the opponent, and yet, we would still lose. Frequently, I found that my team underachieved. Frustration was definitely an emotion I experienced. I remember thinking to myself, "Why do my teammates not work harder, stay more focused, be more confident, or battle harder?" I could have easily turned these questions on myself on several occasions. The piece I was addressing as a player was the mental aspect. Also as a player, I played in games where the opponent had superior technical ability and athleticism and yet, my team prevailed. I remember thinking in those moments about how hard my team worked and how we worked hard together and played with strong desire and confidence. In those experiences I also deduced that the difference was mindset.

Personally, I started off small in size and very uncoordinated. I was not the player that coaches or spectators would have been attracted to, except maybe to ask why he is allowed to participate on the team. After seeing me play in a game one weekend my father made the suggestion that I should stick to the books, as if to say, you are not going to

make it in sports, so focus on academics. The one thing I did have was a strong desire to develop as a player, a willingness to work outside of team practice to learn and improve, and a drive to not be denied something I really wanted, which was to play soccer at the highest level possible for me. I attribute this mentality as the main contributor for going from last in the mind of any coach to being recruited by a couple of different colleges and getting the opportunity to play at the collegiate level.

As a coach, I have had the opportunity to work with many players of varied ages, shapes, sizes, technical ability, tactical awareness, athleticism and mental dispositions. My experience has been that mindset is always the difference. On a few occasions I have been attracted to the shiny fast player that has all the skills, only to find out that they were not interested in working, or learning; they just wanted to play. In some cases they could not get along with their teammates, or were overly critical of their teammates. The team, in all of these cases, also was attracted to the player's abilities and capabilities, but resented the mindset of the player. We all respect and want to play with players / colleagues that work hard and are pleasant to be around. I have also coached players who started their playing days physically challenged in some way or another, and well behind teammates in terms of technical ability and tactical awareness, yet these players had a drive to learn, to improve, and to compete, and they did. In some cases they surpassed their teammates and were eventually rated higher than those others saw as the top player at younger ages.

Mindset is something we notice more when players are in adverse situations. How does the player react when their team is down a goal, two goals, three goals, six goals? Does the player compete, or do they lose the drive to compete? Do they step up or hang their head and just go

through the motions? How does a player react when they make a mistake, when the referee makes a mistake, when the coach pulls them off the field, or puts them on the field in a position that they are not yet familiar? How do they respond when they are placed on the "B" team and not the "A" team? Is the player willing to work outside of regular team training sessions to improve an aspect of their game that they or their coach has identified? And again, do they compete?

In the mind of this coach, mindset is the factor that affects all other aspects of a player's development and performance.

One of our goals at EMFC is to select and work with players that exhibit the mindset we believe will help them and the team achieve their developmental and playing goals. We are attracted to players who want to learn, want to do the work to develop (during and away from team training) and enjoy the game.

In the car, or at home, after practice or a game, where does mindset fit into your discussion with your son or daughter?

"In the confrontation between the stream and the rock, the stream always wins... not through strength, but by perseverance." – H. Jackson Brown

**Joe Beeler, U10-12
Technical Director**





Expanding EMFC Access to the Community

Beginning in January 2011, the EMFC board will embark on a campaign to ensure access to our programs for all youth and to raise the profile of EMFC in the community. This effort is part of the growth of the club as it enters its fifth year. The board has formed a development committee whose charge is to raise funds for the scholarship program, expand outreach to potential community partners, host community events, and engage as many EMFC players and their families in our efforts as possible.

Why is access important? Building EMFC as a respected Club in Oregon requires fielding competitive teams. Competitive teams rely on the participation and dedication of talented soccer players who come from all areas of our community. A primary hurdle to participation is financial. The board is committed to exploring ways to improve existing assistance programs and to create new programs to alleviate the financial burden. Current assistance programs are the FEE REDUCTION program and EMFC SCHOLARSHIP program. Each program is open to ALL players and their families.

The FEE REDUCTION program is a fun way to defray player costs and raise awareness of EMFC in our

community. A work-for-play program at the University of Oregon football, basketball and baseball games allows EMFC to host concession booths staffed by our players and their families. EMFC workers can choose to deposit their credits into their own player's account or to donate their credits to other players or to the EMFC scholarship program. We encourage everyone to work one or two games each year to support their player and EMFC. Contact Lorrie Boyer at lcbsunluvr@hotmail.com for more information. Or, check our website <http://www.emfc.org> for more information.

The EMFC SCHOLARSHIP Program has been in place since the founding of our club in 2006. In 2010, players received \$40,000 in scholarships awarded by a committee appointed by the board to review applications submitted by player families. The awards partially fund player fees for individual players on EMFC teams from U10 through U18. Scholarships are awarded based on demonstrated financial need. On average, two to three players on each EMFC team qualify for partial awards. The majority of the scholarships are given to families whose incomes qualify them for free or reduced school lunch program.

Every year, the EMFC board has allocated funds for player scholarships out of the general operating budget of the club. These funds have come from varied sources, including player fees, camp and clinic tuition, and donations from individuals and organizations. The EMFC board is currently discussing ways to sustainably fund the EMFC Scholarship Program. If you are interested in getting involved in these development efforts, please contact Tris O'Shaughnessy at trisosh@gmail.com. Donations to the EMFC Scholarship Program are always welcome. You can send your tax-deductible donations to: EMFC, PO BOX 10914, Eugene, OR 97440. Thank you for your consideration.

This is an exciting time for EMFC. Join us in our efforts to engage the community to support our players. In the coming weeks and months, we will contact you with ways to get involved. We ask that all players and their families participate in as many opportunities as possible by giving their time and support.



The Science of Speed and Agility

My name is Michael Caprai. I have had the pleasure of conducting Speed & Agility sessions with EMFC teams and individual EMFC athletes over the past few months. I have even conducted a "coaches only" training to equip them with the tools (through demonstration and application) to reinforce the program with their teams in between training sessions. As I have worked with EMFC athletes, I have encountered many questions from athletes, parents and coaches who didn't make the coaches only training.

Speed & Agility training – what is this? What does it really mean? What are the benefits and why should my child participate? What do the methods you use have to do with soccer? OK, I didn't really get ALL those questions, but know that they are floating around the brains of many. They are fair questions that need to be answered.

Let's first begin by defining agility and the difference between speed and quickness.

AGILITY- Agility, in terms of sports performance, refers to an athlete's ability to change direction quickly and appropriately while maintaining maximal speed, balance, and power. Agility can also refer to how well an athlete can change directions laterally. Put another way, agility is the ability to change the body's human position efficiently, and requires the integration of isolated movement skills using a combination of balance, coordination, speed, reflexes, physical strength, endurance, and stamina.

SPEED-The definition of speed from a scientific standpoint is simply distance / time, but this is a rather simplistic view of speed. A more educated definition of speed is this: speed is the ability of an athlete to move as fast as possible, through the optimal range of motion, in a deliberate and intentional manner, in a particular direction. Speed is not just measured on how fast a person is either; there are several components of measurement that give a complete

picture of an athlete's speed.

There are four main components of speed: starting speed, acceleration, speed efficiency, and speed endurance.

Starting speed is the ability of an athlete to go from a stopped or non-moving state to a moving or mobile state. Starting speed is a crucial component of sports and is often referred to as the "first step". For many sports, it takes just that one step to blow by the opponent, so it should come as no surprise that training "start speed" is very important in sports.

The second component of speed is acceleration. **Acceleration** is defined as the ability of an athlete to reach maximal speed in the shortest amount of time, under control. The two typical ways to improve acceleration are by improving the athlete's stride length and stride frequency. Stride length is the amount of distance covered by one full stride of an athlete, and stride frequency is how fast an athlete can turn over the limb to produce another stride.

The next component of speed is speed efficiency. **Speed efficiency** covers both the range of motion of the athlete and the deliberateness of the athlete's movement. A flexible athlete will have improved speed efficiency because the body will be able to move through the optimal range of motion with less drag from a tight muscle. Also, by being flexible, an athlete can utilize the optimal movement patterns that will lead to increased stride length.

The final component of speed is speed endurance. **Speed endurance** is usually dictated by the three energy systems in the body; speed burst needed over a two- or three-second period, speed sustainability over a 90-second period, speed sustainability for durations of time over two minutes. These three systems are very different, and training emphasis for each is different based on the sport played, as sports require different sustained speeds. Most soccer is

played in stages one and two over a long period of time.

QUICKNESS-quickness is just another name for *explosiveness* and *reaction time*. Reaction time refers to how long it takes an athlete to react to a stimulus – eye-hand coordination and quickness (reaction), foot speed and agility quickness, both lateral and linear.

Whew! OK, let's move away from biomechanics 101 and look at the benefits and methods of the Speed & Agility training program at EMFC.

Obvious benefits of training are to increase proficiency in all the above mentioned areas. First it is important to understand that **FORM** is crucial in training. It is the foundation upon which all athleticism should be built. If drills are conducted repetitively, without proper form, then incorrect and inefficient body movements are being reinforced, thus hindering the athlete's progress generally and skill development in their sport.

As I am working with the athletes, I constantly describe, demonstrate, check for understanding, and reinforce proper body movements and form (biomechanics) through a variety of drills. I have them exaggerate the movements throughout each drill, which at first feels unnatural. The intent here is to ultimately have them functioning somewhere in between the inefficient movement they are used to and the exaggerated form I am requiring them to demonstrate. This method of training creates muscle memory allowing the athlete to focus on the sport vs. their form, and the efficiency of body movement increases their speed, agility, power, reaction and quickness. If I can get the body used to exaggerated proper form and movement, the body will perform better, moving naturally during sport.

When appropriate, I will progress from the basics to more advanced drills and movements (with and without the ball). The drills are broken down into two categories:

Programmed- the athlete is told exactly what movement is expected.

Reactive- random stimulus is introduced during a drill requiring them to react mentally and physically, sometimes while conducting a programmed drill.

This training is progressive. The need for building a solid foundation of proper form, repetition and maintenance are imperative. I train teams in the Club on a rotational basis allowing me to work with them approximately every two to three months. I can also work privately with individuals or small groups outside of the Club. The more EMFC coaches participate in the "Coaches Training," the deeper the program will be reinforced throughout the Club year-round. Other benefits include increased conditioning and better performance in other sports outside of soccer.

These types of programs are typically found in larger futbol clubs or aren't introduced until high school, college or beyond. Most professional athletes in field sports, court sports, and track utilize this type of training. EMFC is very fortunate to have a director like Jurgen who recognizes the importance and the benefits of implementing this specialized training for your youth athletes. By the time current U11 players make it to high school, they will have a distinct advantage over others who have not had exposure to proper Speed and Agility training.

For more information about me and or my program, go to www.speedtraining4me.com and remember, "Training is the opposite of Hoping."

Regards,

Michael Caprai

EMFC's Commitment to ACL Injury Prevention

A few weeks back on a cold and rainy Friday night, 15 EMFC coaches gathered at the Slocum Center to learn more about how to help prevent ACL injuries occurring at high rates in female soccer players. Over the years, the Slocum Center and in particular Dr. Koester has helped EMFC coaches with a number of injury prevention clinics to improve our understanding of injuries, how to respond, and how to prevent them. He and his staff held several concussion clinics for our coaches and we have worked with him to establish the Prevent Injuries and Enhance Performance (PEP) program in our club about 18 months ago. This recent refresher for our coaches was run by Dr. Koester and Julie Embree, a physical therapist in the Slocum Center. We brought in our U13 girls Roma team with head coach Dave Peterson and Assistant coach Jessica Cardwell to have live subjects for demonstrating purposes. The clinic was a big success and further established a very important injury prevention program in our club. All our girls' teams use this ACL PEP program in their curriculum. In addition, Michael Caprai, our speed and agility trainer, who also attended this clinic, will integrate and reemphasize many of these points in his training session as well. However, I think it is important that parents also learn more about this program and its purpose to further emphasize its importance. Please take a look at the article below that Dr. Koester and Julie Embree put together for us.

All the best from Coach Jurgen

ACL Training Program

In response to the growing number of anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injuries occurring in young girls, the Slocum Center for Orthopedics and Sports Medicine now offers a comprehensive and scientifically proven program aimed at limiting the number of these serious injuries. While not all ACL injuries can be prevented, there is scientific evidence that the risk for injury can be reduced.

What is the ACL?

The ACL is the main stabilizer of the knee joint. It attaches the shin bone to the thigh bone. Its function is most important in keeping the knee stable during activities which require cutting, pivoting, and jumping.

Why are girls at increased risk for ACL injury?

Several studies show that high school and college-aged females are six to eight times more likely than boys to suffer an ACL injury while participating in the same sport. A variety of factors have been considered which may account for this difference:

Anatomy- The angle of the hip and knee, size of the ACL, and the size of the "notch" in the femur which the ACL sits all differ in males and females.

Hormones- Many studies have looked at the effects of estrogen, progesterone, and the menstrual cycle on ACL injuries. To date, there have been no definitive conclusions on the role hormonal levels play in ACL injuries.

Neuromuscular factors- There is increasing evidence that neuromuscular control of the knee plays a large role in ACL injuries in female athletes. By increasing trunk and leg strength and "re-learning" the way she jumps and lands, studies show that a young woman can significantly reduce her risk of ACL injury.



How is the ACL injured?

About 70% of ACL tears are “non-contact” injuries. This means that there was not a collision with another player. The typical mechanism is that of the athlete initiating a sudden change in direction. The knee is unable to overcome the sudden force, causing the shin bone (tibia) to shift violently out of position in relation to the thigh bone (femur), severing the ACL. The athlete will typically feel or hear a “pop” and fall to the ground. Other signs and symptoms include:

- ◆ Sudden onset of swelling
- ◆ The knee feels “loose” or unstable when attempting to walk on it.
- ◆ Pain with attempting to, or unable to, completely straighten the knee.

Any injury that results in a swollen knee should be evaluated by a physician. An ACL injury can be diagnosed by physical examination in most cases. An MRI is not always needed, but can be helpful in assessing other injuries to the knee.

How is a torn ACL treated? Unfortunately, ACL tears do not heal. Sports medicine experts recommend that any athlete with an ACL injury undergo surgery to have the ligament reconstructed. It usually takes six to nine months to return to full sports activity following surgery.

How can we lessen the risk of ACL injuries?

Recent research has focused on attempting to alter the neuromuscular factors that are believed to put female athletes at increased risk for ACL injuries. The *PEP Program* (Prevent injury, Enhance Performance) was developed based upon this strategy.

Designed by researchers at the *Santa Monica Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Research Foundation*, the *PEP Program* has been shown to reduce the incidence of ACL injuries in female high school and collegiate athletes.

The goals of the program are:

- ◆ Avoid high risk and vulnerable positions
- ◆ Increase strength
- ◆ Utilize plyometric exercises
- ◆ Increase proprioception and joint awareness through agility drills
- ◆ Increase flexibility

These goals are accomplished through a series of exercises and agility drills. This highly specific 20-minute program replaces a traditional “warm-up” prior to practice three days per week.

When utilized as designed, this program has the effect of changing the way girls move, jump, and land. This takes stress off of the knee, making the knee less vulnerable to injury. Initial studies showed a decrease of 88% in ACL injuries in the PEP Program compared to the untrained group during the first year of the study and a 74% reduction in the second year.

Core Strengthening

Strengthening of the core muscle is another important aspect of proprioception and plyometrics. It is essential to have a good base of support on which to move the arms and legs. Key muscles to strengthen are the transversus abdominis and gluteus medius. The hamstrings also

help with the stabilization of the knees.

ACL Injury Facts

- ◆ ACL injuries are six to eight times more common in female basketball and soccer players than males.
- ◆ Approximately 250,000 ACL injuries occur in the US every year.
- ◆ Statistics show that approximately one out of 20 girls on a soccer team will tear her ACL over the course of a season.
- ◆ After reconstructive surgery, an athlete will be out of sports for at least six to nine months.
- ◆ Athletes are at increased risk for osteoarthritis following an ACL injury, even if they have successful surgical treatment.
- ◆ Following an initial ACL injury, an athlete has a 2.5% risk of another ACL tear in either knee over the next two years.

